

Riverside Study - 1992

PDF Notes

The study was originally laid out in software no longer used by the Community Development Department. As a result, a number of chart images did not convert properly and the text was repaginated. The table of contents and file names refer to the original page numbering system. In addition, many photographs were deleted to compress file sizes for the web.

If you desire to review the report in its original format, contact Elaine Thorne at 617/349-4648 to request a copy.

T R A F F I C A N D

T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

Traffic and Transportation

Introduction

Traffic congestion, insufficient parking and inadequate public transportation are common to all of the neighborhoods in Cambridge; indeed, they are common to any urban core in the country. Within the city, however, Riverside bears an unusually large burden when it comes to these issues. The neighborhood is the gateway to Cambridge from the Massachusetts Turnpike, Storrow Drive and Memorial Drive, bringing commuters from the suburbs into or through the city, as well as trucks traveling to Interstates 93 and 95 north of the City. Riverside is also a very compact neighborhood, and the regional traffic brought from these major routes compounds the already heavy in-town traffic and tight parking situation.

The streets in Riverside, as in nearly all of the City's neighborhoods, are a combination of native trails (Putnam Avenue to Western,) colonial settlements (Holyoke, Dunster and Plympton at Harvard Square,) early 19th century turnpikes (River and Western,) mid-century growth outward from commercial centers (Green and Franklin at Central Square,) later housing subdivisions, and early 20th century pleasure roads (Memorial Drive). The evolutionary aspect of the streets, along with the dense development of the neighborhood and city as a whole, leaves little possibility of rebuilding the roads on any major scale. The Study Committee, understanding this constraint, focused their discussions on studying traffic management issues, enforcement of existing regulations and improving road condi-

tions.

Riverside carries 8.4 miles of the City's 125 miles of streets. This is 6.7 percent of the total roadway system. Modern usage has outgrown the capacities intended originally for these roads. River Street and Western Avenue each carry an estimated 7,500 cars each day commuting in and out of the city. Likewise, approximately 1,850 single-unit and tractor-trailer trucks travel up River Street from the Massachusetts Turnpike every day. This is since the truck ban on River Street has taken effect in 1974. (For a further break out of traffic on River Street, see the Appendix.)

Four MBTA bus routes serve the neighborhood, though service is limited mostly to the River Street/Western Avenue corridors:

- Route #1: travels from Harvard Square to Dudley Square in Boston along Massachusetts Avenue.
- Route #64: goes from Oak Square in Brighton to Central Square. Buses leaving Central Square travel down River Street, but return via Magazine Street.
- Route #70: travels from Watertown Square or Cedarwood in Waltham to Central Square by way of River and Western.
- Route #74: goes from north Waltham to Central Square, again along River and Western.

Despite what seems to be an ever increasing number of cars parking on the streets of Riverside, the Department of Traffic and Transportation's records indicate that the number of parking stickers issued has remained steady since 1986. By the end of 1986, Traffic and Transportation had issued 2,110 permits to

Riverside residents. The number of permits issued had increased to only 2,171 by 1989. Records are not available for the years prior to 1986. Students living in Harvard undergraduate dorms cannot park their cars on city streets as the City does not permit Harvard University undergraduates to obtain city parking permits. In support of this policy, Harvard discourages undergraduates from bringing cars to school with them. Any undergraduate wishing to bring a car must park it in the parking garage near the Business School in Allston and pay the normal storage charges.

The Committee was unanimous in feeling that automobile use needed to be diminished in some way. All members of the Committee recognized the frustration of dealing with this topic on a neighborhood or even city level, as the problem is regional in scope and there is no clear national policy on traffic management. Despite this, the Committee urged state and local governments to work towards a solution of this critical situation. They especially want government to explore the use of jitney services to augment available public transportation.

With regards to traffic management, River Street and Western Avenue were foremost in the minds of the Committee members. They were extremely disappointed in police enforcement of traffic regulations for these two corridors. Despite the fact that both streets are predominantly (85%) residential, local traffic and commuters ignore universally the 25 mile an hour speed limit. Several Committee members spoke vehemently of truck traffic on River and Western, citing stories of their houses rattling them awake in the middle of the night when trucks traveled up River Street illegally. Poor visibility caused by the chronic illegal parking on River and Western at the intersections of Auburn and Pleasant Streets adds to the danger of these roads. At the other end of these streets, the state has named the intersection of River and Memorial Drive as one of the ten worst in the Commonwealth.

The Committee identified the intersection of Western and Howard as another problem area. Cars park without regard to handicap ramps and parking regulations, and often ignore the lights at

the intersection. Committee members spoke of how the cars often speed through the side streets off of Western.

What Riverside residents say about traffic and parking: results from the 1990 telephone survey.

As part of the neighborhood telephone survey, residents were asked several questions about traffic, streets, parking and public transportation.

Almost three quarters (71%) thought that the availability of parking was a major concern:

- this feeling was common to nearly all demographic groups.

Likewise, more than half of the residents surveyed said that traffic congestion was a major concern to them:

- one-third said that it was a minor concern, while only about one-tenth of the respondents felt it was of no concern to them.
- these proportions did not change much in other demographic groups, except for long term residents. Nearly three quarters of those who have lived in the neighborhood for 21 years or more said that traffic congestion was a major concern.
- home owners were also more likely than the general population to say that this issue was a major concern.

There was a more mixed response to a question concerning the availability of public transportation:

- thirty-two percent of the residents said that it was a major concern, 28 percent a minor concern, and 40 percent said that it was no concern at all.
- this held true across all demographic categories.

Respondents have mixed opinions regarding the condition of street lighting, the repair of streets, sidewalks and shrubbery, and the cleanliness of the streets and sidewalks:

- respondents were more likely to say that these were adequate and very good than to say they were poor.

Another situation of concern to the Committee is the traffic siphoned off of Memorial Drive during summer Sundays when Memorial Drive is closed for Riverbend Park. More traffic manage-

ment is needed during these times, particularly at the intersection of Hingham and Putnam which is dangerous because of poor visibility. In addition, the diverted traffic on Putnam backs up at the light at Massachusetts Avenue, making the street very difficult and dangerous to cross even at pedestrian cross walks. The Committee would like the City to work more closely with the Metropolitan District Commission to insure accessibility to the park and a smooth flow of traffic through the neighborhood on Sundays during the summer.

The Committee urges the City to make the streets of the neighborhood as safe for drivers and pedestrians as possible. Poor visibility from overgrown brush at certain corners, unpruned trees, cracked and uneven sidewalks, and poor lighting in pockets of the neighborhoods add to the hazards of walking or driving through Riverside.

Traffic and Transportation Recommendations

Traffic Management and Public Transportation

1. Public Transportation: Explore the feasibility of an “intra-city” bus line, such as a jitney service, that would provide transportation to and from focal points within the City. This type of system could induce patronage of Central Square businesses.
2. Regional Transportation Planning: Support a regional transportation system that would decrease truck traffic into Riverside, especially on River Street and Western Avenue, and other parts of the city; decrease commuter traffic; and encourage the use of public transportation.

Traffic and Parking

These recommendations are addressed to the Department of Traffic and Transportation and the Cambridge Police Department, unless otherwise noted.

1. Enforce truck access regulations, speed limits, and parking regulations in the neighborhood. Continue to have sporadic police enforcement of current traffic regulations to show the public that violators are being fined. In addition, the Cambridge Police Department should dedicate an officer to enforce traffic regulations around the city. Of special concern is:
 - a. the continuous presence of illegal truck traffic on River Street and Western Avenue;
 - b. speeding traffic on Howard Street (during afternoon rush hour,) River and Western;
 - c. illegal parking at the north corner of Putnam Avenue at Hingham (illegally parked cars on Putnam Avenue create a blind corner, and thus a dangerous intersection);

- d. illegal parking on the east and west sides of Western Avenue at the Pleasant and Auburn Streets intersections; and
- e. illegal parking at Western Avenue and Howard Streets.

2. Install two-way stop signs at the intersection of Hancock and Green Streets.

The Department of Traffic and Transportation has installed these stop signs at this intersection.

3. Adjust light cycles at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, Mt. Auburn Street and Putnam Avenue on the Sundays when Memorial Drive is closed to traffic. Blinking lights at this intersection would facilitate the movement of through traffic using Putnam Avenue.

4. Explore the possibility of adding bicycle parking spaces and creating dedicated bicycle lanes and routes.

The City Council has established a Bicycle Committee to improve bicycle access through out the city. The Committee is installing new bicycle racks at various public locations.

Road Conditions

These recommendations are addressed to the Public Works Department.

1. Place trash cans at locations throughout the neighborhood including schools, bus stops and school routes.
2. Clean up trash.
3. Repave Franklin Street.
4. Develop a tree pruning schedule and adopt an active approach to maintaining street trees.
5. Promote the pruning of privately owned trees and shrubs.

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6. Survey root damage and repair without sacrificing the tree.
 7. Conduct a survey of areas with insufficient lighting and correct the problems.
 8. Enforce sidewalk snow removal ordinance.
 9. Remove excess plowed snow from the streets.
 10. Enforce the City ordinance prohibiting the use of trash cans and other household items to save parking spaces on the street.
 11. Use alternatives to road salt during winter storms.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development

Employment

Fundamental to the health of a neighborhood is the ability of the residents to find suitable and sustainable employment. One of the Committee's concerns was that neighborhood residents be able, in this shifting and more difficult economy, to find jobs that will allow them to live and raise their families in Riverside.

Riverside Employment Profile

- A plurality, 44 percent of the survey respondents are employed full-time, an additional 8 percent work part-time, 2 percent are unemployed and 11 percent are retired. One-third, 33 percent, are full-time students, and 1 percent are homemakers.
- Full-time employment status is fairly even across the different racial groups, with the exception of Asians, most of whom appear to be students:

All	44%
Black	46%
White	47%
Asian/other	19%

- However, full-time student status differs substantially between the different racial groups:

All	33%
Black	18%
White	31%
Asian/other	71%

- Blacks have a higher unemployment rate than other racial groups:

All	2%
Black	7%
White	1%
Asian/other	0%

Unemployment may have risen in Riverside as it has city-wide, since the survey.

- In general, 65 percent of the survey respondents feel that their jobs match their skills and education very well; 27 percent said the match was adequate, and 8% said that their jobs did not match their skills and education very well.

In this latter group, the biggest obstacle to moving into better work was the lack of suitable jobs.

- Incomes in the neighborhood reflect residents' employment situation, with 55 percent of the nonstudent population earning in the middle- and high-income categories. Although there are some variations by age and race, most people in Riverside are middle-income or above. (See Neighborhood Profile chapter for further detail.)

At the heart of employment is the nature of the economy. The last 20 years have brought about profound changes in the city's economy. The "old" Cambridge economy was based mostly on manufacturing and educational institutions. During the 1950s, manufacturing began to move out of the city, as it did throughout the Northeast. That trend continued into the 1970s, when the manufacturing sector began to decline more rapidly, and new firms in the services sector started to emerge as key components of the city's economy. Since 1970, jobs in the services sector have nearly doubled, while those in manufacturing and construction have declined 50 percent. Education, unlike manufacturing however, continues to be a strong employment base in the city, and appears likely to remain that way. Jobs in education account for 22 percent of all the jobs.

Riverside's employment history echoes the trends in the city's changing economy. According to the US Census, with similar indications from the 1990 telephone survey, most of Riverside's population has worked for the last three decades in professional industries. In 1970, over half of the population (56%) said they worked in professional services such as education, law or health care. This increased slightly by 1980. The 1990 telephone survey indicates that a significant portion of the residents still work in professional services, although the data from the Census and the survey are not directly comparable because of structural differences between the two. (See Methodology for a fuller explanation.)

Within the professional services industry, education stands out as a major employer of neighborhood residents. In the 1970 Census, over one-third of Riverside's residents said that they were employed in education. This increased to 44 percent in 1980, and dipped slightly to 37 percent in the 1990 Census. This is well above the 26 percent who work in educational services city-wide.

The proportion of Riverside residents employed by manufacturing concerns has dropped considerably over the last three decades. This is not surprising considering that nearly all of the Riverside's heavy industry and that of the surrounding area closed by the early 1970s. Fourteen percent of the neighborhood's population was employed by manufacturing in 1970, compared with eight percent in 1980. The telephone survey indicates a further decline.

The corner stone of the city's "new" economy is knowledge-based companies, such as computer software, artificial intelligence, and particularly medical/biotechnology. According to the city's 1991 employment survey, companies in the medical/biotechnical field had the highest growth rate in the previous three years, and are expected to continue growing in the next few years as well.

The level of education needed to participate in the emerging economy is considerably higher and somewhat different than that needed for traditional manufacturing or retail. Where once a

high school diploma or less sufficed, now this is no longer true. Traditional vocational skills are also not enough to secure a job in today's employment market. For example, in interviews with representatives of the medical/biotechnical companies, the majority did not recommend their industry to job applicants with only a high school diploma. Technical and professional positions, both requiring some post-high school education, are projected to grow most rapidly, while traditional skilled craft, unskilled labor and clerical positions are likely to decline.

Riverside's population appears to have the educational requirements to meet the needs of the growing knowledge-based industries in Cambridge. Overall, the neighborhood is quite highly educated. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the telephone survey respondents have a college degree or a higher level of educational achievement; 22 percent have some college education. The remainder (15%) have a high school diploma or some lower level of education. This does not mean, however, that all residents in the neighborhood have the level of education needed to take advantage of the new economy. These residents need additional training and employment opportunities.

This high level of educational attainment goes beyond solely the university student population, and is true of nearly all demographic groups. The survey does indicate, however, newcomers (five or fewer years,) Whites, and younger residents are more likely to have a higher level of education than longer-term residents, Blacks and older residents.

Nonstudent Population	lived in Riverside	
	< 5 years	> 5 years
completed high school/GED or less:	5%	30%
completed some college or more:	95%	70%

Race	Black	White
completed high school/GED or less:	33.3%	13%
completed some college or more:	66.6%	87%

Age	15-34	35-44	45-64	65+
completed high school/ GED or less:	5%	11%	27%	75%
some college or more:	95%	89%	73%	25%

An unusual feature in the neighborhood is the relationship between income and level of educational attainment. While there is generally a correlation between higher incomes and more education, this is not true of Riverside. Seventy-five percent of low-income survey respondents and 90 percent of those with moderate incomes had some college education or more. The high number of university students explains much of this phenomenon, added to the number of elderly respondents who are of low- or moderate-income and have completed only high school or less.

Income	low	mod	mid	high
completed high school /GED or less:	25%	10%	13%	4%
some college or more:	75%	90%	87%	96%

Committee Discussions

The Committee stressed the need for the job training programs which will provide residents with the skills needed to find jobs in the city. This is especially important so that people who have lived in Riverside all of their lives and who do not necessarily have the education required by the new industries are able to stay in the neighborhood and raise *their* families in Riverside if they so choose. The Committee also emphasized the need for youth to become aware of what skills they will need to acquire to access these jobs.

In addition to employment issues, the Committee also discussed commercial activity in and around the neighborhood, as this, too, is an indication of the general economic well-being of the community. The Committee especially wanted to discuss small neighborhood businesses,

minority-owned and women-owned businesses and Central Square. The Committee recognized the importance of Harvard Square to the neighborhood, but felt that if there was a problem with Harvard Square, it was over-investment rather than the opposite. While such investment may bring about its own set of issues, the problems facing Central Square are much more serious.

The Committee expressed concern about Central Square. They understood why residents took the bus or drove down Western Avenue and across the river to the Watertown and Arsenal Malls; it is perceived to be safer, and has easier parking for drivers. Members saw also the social problems of Central Square compounding what they perceived as an unwillingness of the property owners to be more realistic about the nature of the Square and who shops there. Central Square needs to make itself more attractive, physically and market-wise, to customers.

The Committee noted a dramatic lack of minority-owned and women-owned businesses for a commercial area which serves a large minority population. The City needs to support the creation of minority-owned and women-owned businesses through developing programs which provide organizational and financial assistance to people wanting to start new businesses and companies. The City should direct these programs to small businesses in the neighborhood as well. Not only would such businesses reflect the population diversity of the city, they would also establish the ties between residents and business which is now lacking. Overall, members stressed the importance of supporting local businesses, as healthy, strong businesses are a source of jobs for residents and neighborhood youth. In this way, stores not only provide goods and services to local customers, but give back more to the neighborhood community in terms of the salaries and wages of its employees.

Economic Development Recommendations

Community Action

1. Support the inclusion of business and employment issues as part of a Riverside Neighborhood Committee agenda. Such a committee would monitor operational issues such as noise, traffic and trash.
2. Support studies of neighborhood business and employment.

Since this study, community access to basic goods and services, such as a supermarket, has become an issue for the Riverside neighborhood and the City as a whole.

Employment

1. Support the Cambridge Youth Employment Program.
2. Support the Cambridge Employment Program and other employment initiatives.

Since the completion of the study committee process, the Community Development Department has added the Cambridge Biomedical Careers Initiative to its employment training programs. The Initiative is a one year, full time program training participants in math, basic science and laboratory techniques. Nineteen Cambridge residents are enrolled in the program.

3. Support the development of employment programs with Harvard University.

Central Square

1. Support human service programs to aid the homeless and other needy constituencies in the Square; and
2. Support the police to combat crime in the Square.
3. Maintain a representative from the neighborhood on the Central Square Advisory Committee.

Significant changes have occurred since completion of the study committee process. The Mayor's Commission to Promote

and Enhance Central Square Now! completed a report which included suggestions for physical improvements to Central Square. In 1993, the Central Square Neighborhood Coalition was formed, made up of representatives from the four abutting neighborhoods. Working with the Central Square Business Association and the City, they have brought energy and imagination towards developing a new vision for Central Square. To that end, the City has undertaken the development of an urban design plan for Central Square and approved a budget for capital improvements to begin implementation of the plan. The City of Cambridge is sponsoring, in conjunction with local businesses, the Cambridge Business Development Center (CBDC), an organization dedicated to strengthening and enhancing entrepreneurship in the city and the Central Square neighborhood. CBDC is a resource center and provides support services to businesses seeking to locate in Central Square or already in Cambridge.

Neighborhood Business

1. Support pro-active strategies to bring businesses to the neighborhood by:
 - a. capitalizing on the ethnic and racial diversity of the neighborhood to draw businesses into the neighborhood;
 - b. promoting the establishment of small businesses, minority-owned businesses and women-owned businesses in the neighborhood;
 - c. restructuring the existing zoning regulations along the major streets in the neighborhood to allow small neighborhood-based and pedestrian-oriented businesses to relocate there.

The City, through the Community Development Department, is participating with four other cities in the state's Urban Initiative Fund program, whereby eligible minority-owned businesses and nonprofits can seek financing from a \$5 million loan pool.

L A N D U S E, Z O N I N G
A N D U R B A N D E S I G N

Land Use, Zoning and Urban Design

Riverside's landscape, as that of nearly all of Cambridge's neighborhoods, has changed considerably over the past several decades. No longer visible are the presses, binderies and other factories with their manufacturing jobs. Changed, too, are the commercial activities surrounding the neighborhood. Central Square is no longer "down town" for most, serving as their chief family shopping area. The stores and offices along Massachusetts Avenue draw their patrons from a wider region, and not just from the neighborhood.

This chapter discusses land use and zoning in Riverside: what development took place during the 1980s, residents' attitudes towards that development; and the remaining development potential in Riverside, as allowed under current zoning, and the implications for the neighborhood. Finally, the chapter will address the issue of urban design, with the Study Committee's vision for the future of the neighborhood.

Development Activity

As described in the Introduction to this study, during the 1980s, the city, along with the surrounding region, experienced unprecedented growth, adding close to 10 million square feet of new commercial space and over 1,000 hotel rooms. Nearly half of that development occurred in East Cambridge, as software and biotechnology firms thrive where makers of footwear and soap once stood. By contrast, less than 2 million square feet

of commercial space was constructed between 1960 and 1979.

Unlike the city, Riverside's most significant and redefining redevelopment took place during the 60s and 70s with the expansion of Harvard University, rather than in the past decade. Harvard-related developments included Holyoke Center at 1350 Massachusetts Avenue (1960-1965,) Peabody Terrace (1967) and Mather House (1973.) (See Harvard chapter for further detail.) Noninstitutional development was limited to the Riverside Technology Center at 840 Memorial Drive, constructed in the mid 70s, and a few small commercial and residential projects.

Most of the commercial development that did take place in Riverside during the 1980s occurred around the edges of the neighborhood: either in Harvard or Central Squares, or along Massachusetts Avenue. In all, about 227,000 square feet of commercial space was constructed in Riverside since 1980, accounting for only two percent of all development city-wide. (See development listing in the Appendix.) The largest project was the phased development of 1000 and 1030 Massachusetts Avenue with 174,000 square feet of office and retail space. A third phase with 102,000 square feet was not constructed when the Cambridge Historical Commission and City Council voted in 1985 to designate the copper beach tree on the property as a local historical landmark.

The most visible development within the neighborhood during the 1980s was the construction of four residential properties adding 245 dwelling units to the housing stock:

Project	Number of Units	Type
Bay Square Mass. Ave. and Bay St.	110	condo
Hammond Court 340 Franklin Street	73	condo
Cyrus Fellows Crossing 325 Franklin Street	40	rental
16 Elmer Street	22	rental

What do Riverside residents say about the effects of new development on the neighborhood? The results of the 1990 telephone survey.

The relatively small amount of noninstitutional development activity occurring during the 1980s in Riverside did not mean that residents were unaffected by city-wide growth.

Riverside residents are ambivalent in their attitudes towards new development:

- 30% say it will have a positive effect
- 33% say a negative effect
- 37% say no effect

Home owners were significantly more likely than renters to say that new development will have a positive effect, 38% to 28%.

Blacks were more likely than Whites, 37% to 28% to view development as positive.

Respondents named some of the positive effects of development as:

- improvements to the physical characteristics of the neighborhood
- bringing people into the neighborhood
- creating job opportunities

They named some of the negative effects as:

- increased traffic
- overcrowding
- lack of parking
- over development.

Development Potential

A substantial amount of development potential, square footage that could be built under current zoning regulations, remains in Riverside. Most of River Street and Western Avenue are able to be redeveloped at nearly twice the existing height and density. Development on the land between Putnam Avenue and the Charles River is also considerably less than what is allowed under current zoning. Below is a summary of what exists and what is possible given the zoning. (See Existing Zoning map for zoning district locations.)

Residence C-2 Zoning Districts on Western Avenue, from Green Street to Jay Street and from Howard Street to Putnam Avenue:

Currently, the two Residence C-2 districts on Western are characterized by much of the same two-, three- and four-story housing stock found throughout the neighborhood, although there is some taller and more dense residential construction nearer to Massachusetts Avenue and Central Square. The Residence C-2 zone is intended to be a moderate-density residential district allowing a height of 85 feet. This would be the equivalent of approximately eight stories. The zoning also does not allow commercial uses in the district. Existing businesses are allowed to continue to operate, but a new business could not move into a space not previously occupied by that use.

Business A Zoning Districts on River Street and Western Avenue:

The Business A zones are similar in character to the Residence C-2 zones and the small-scale core of the residential neighborhood. The Business A zone is also a moderate-density designation, but allows commercial uses as well. As in the C-2 zones, eight story residential buildings could be built where two- three- and four-story houses now stand.

Residence C-3 Zoning District on Memorial Drive:

This area is a mixture of small-scale houses, Harvard dormitories and affiliate housing, and commercial businesses. The zone is intended as a high-density residential designation allowing for institutional housing, such as dormitories. In fact, Harvard owns much of the land in the Residence C-3 district. The zoning does not allow for commercial development, meaning that commercial uses presently located in the district can stay, but, as with the Residence C-2 districts on Western Avenue, new businesses cannot move into previously noncommercial spaces. There is no height limit under Residence C-3 regulations.

Office 3 Zoning District on Memorial Drive:

The Office 3 district comprises Riverside's only remaining industrial use, the power plant, Riverside Press Park, converted office buildings and small-scale houses. Like the Residence C-3 zone, it is intended as a high-density district and has no height limit; however, the Office 3 zone allows for both commercial and residential uses, similar to that of 808 Memorial Drive. The likeliest land for redevelopment in the Office 3 district is the Elbery Ford site (in Cambridgeport) on River Street and Putnam Avenue. The ten parcels (130,376 sq. ft.) that make up the old Elbery Ford business allow for the construction of an approximately 390,000 square foot building.

For a complete build-out analysis of these zoning districts, please see the Appendix.

It is important to keep in mind when discussing development potential, that what *could be built* in an area is not necessarily what *will be built*. For example, under current zoning, nearly 400,000 square feet of commercial development could be built on Riverside Press Park. However, the land is dedicated park land, as defined under state law, and it is extremely unlikely that the city would ever redevelop the land. Likewise, it appears highly unlikely that Harvard would redevelop the Harvard Houses along the Charles River in the near future, given the close association they have with the university's image, even though they are well below what could be developed there.

Other constraints in the Zoning Ordinance also affect what could be built on any given parcel. These include, but are not limited to, setbacks (requiring a building to be located a certain distance from the front, side and rear lot lines) and the number of parking spaces required.

Committee Discussions

The Committee expressed alarm at the amount of redevelopment potential remaining in Riverside, fearing that, if built out, it could ruin the physical character of the neighborhood. However, members also understood that Harvard is very unlikely to rebuild a great deal of the underdeveloped area of the campus. (See Harvard chapter for full discussion.) The Committee also expressed great concern that, given the ugliness of the buildings that have been built, that insensitive design could further erode the character of the neighborhood.

The corner of the neighborhood near Central Square comprising the Residence C-2 district worried the Committee in that it seemed to be a no man's land with no real identity. It is not Central Square, yet it has a slightly larger scale of development than the core of the neighborhood. Buildings like 325 and 340 Franklin Street only add to its visual disarray, and make it more difficult to establish a pleasing sense of place there. The Committee was not sure if the Residence C-2 zoning in this area was entirely inappropriate, understanding that zoning is not necessarily responsible for design. They did feel, however, that the heights allowed under the zoning should be reconsidered and that the boundaries of the Residence C-2 district should be looked at to insure that they do not intrude too far into the smaller scale neighborhood. Design guidelines would be most helpful in this area.

The Committee expressed great concern for River Street and Western Avenue, not for what has happened along the streets in terms of new development, but for what could happen under the existing zoning. They felt the streets were besieged enough already with car and truck traffic, and the possibility of twice as much development as already exists would destroy the character of the streets entirely.

In addition to density and scale problems, the Committee worried that the types and size of commercial uses allowed by the current zoning were out of scale with the neighborhood and that the zoning itself does not acknowledge River and Western as predominantly residential streets with only about 15 percent commercial use. The members supported the presence of small neighborhood stores, saying that these stores are part of what gives the neighborhood its special character. They provide a convenient place for residents to go for goods and services, and are places for neighbors to see each other. They are also a possible source of employment for neighborhood youth. They could be the starting place for minority-owned enterprises which the Committee said was extremely important to them. However, stores and businesses located within a residential neighborhood can create problems, notably parking and trash. The Committee struggled with defining the balance between promoting small business and protecting the residents of that immediate area. They agreed that the current zoning is too permissive and allowed for too many businesses including ones that were clearly too big for the streets. The zoning needs to consider what would be economically viable, but also what would contribute to the quality of life in the neighborhood and not add to its deterioration.

In addition to working with Harvard University to establish design guidelines and development standards for future university development along the river, the Committee felt adamantly that further protection of the riverfront was needed with regards to noninstitutional development. Areas of the greatest concern are a smooth transition between the core residential neighborhood and the riverfront in terms of scale, height and density; prevention of visual intrusions along the river, including imposing shadows; and quality of design. This is especially true of the Office 3 zoning district containing the Elbery Ford site on River Street and Putnam Avenue. While this site is technically located in Cambridgeport, any redevelopment of the site, with its allowance of

unlimited height, will have an enormous effect on Riverside just across the street. Even scattered redevelopment of the non-Harvard parcels of the Residence C-3 district can have a deleterious effect on the neighborhood, as exemplified by 16 Elmer Street. Many members contend that 16 Elmer is too tall and too big for its immediate surroundings.

In addition to problems with the zoning, the Study Committee said there is a need to pull together an overall vision for the neighborhood. They felt that there has been a gradual erosion of the physical character and integrity of the core residential neighborhood over the decades through intrusive and insensitive new development. Again, the Committee cited the apartments at 16 Elmer Street, saying that it is the ugliest building ever built in the neighborhood, with 325 and 340 Franklin Street following closely behind. Not only are these buildings ugly, but they are far removed from the development pattern already existing in the neighborhood. Design guidelines and standards would also insure compatibility of design with the surrounding neighborhood, as it would with the transition between the higher density riverfront and Harvard campus and the neighborhood.

Along with design guidelines, a series of physical improvements would aid in pulling the neighborhood together visually, and, ultimately, would strengthen community life. The Committee discussed some of these improvements in other chapters; however, it is important to list them again, together under the umbrella of urban design to show how they are interrelated. First is the rehabilitation of three of the neighborhood's parks, Hoyt, Cpl. Burns and Franklin Street, as discussed in the Open Space Chapter. Parks are gathering places for people, and their importance to the cohesiveness to the community cannot be underestimated. Second is the enhancement of people's experience as they walk down the streets of the neighborhood, and making them inviting and safe to use. Rebuilding sidewalks, installing handicap ramps, planting more street trees, and

improving street lighting would affect residents of all income levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and ages. Third is the creation of a gateway to the city at River Street and Memorial Drive. This intersection is the main route into the city from the western section of Boston, the western suburbs, the Massachusetts Turnpike and Storrow Drive. A new entrance would show off Riverside

Press Park and even the architectural richness of the power station, and would transform what is otherwise a visually bleak area into a bright welcome into the city. A gateway would reflect and celebrate the diversity and vitality of the life inside it.

Land Use, Zoning and Urban Design Recommendations

Urban Design

1. Strengthen the connection of Riverside to the Charles River.
2. Create a “gateway” to Cambridge on River Street.
3. Maintain scale, density, and pattern of development appropriate to a site, especially in or bordering residential areas.
4. Promote the creation of a “greenbelt” to connect the neighborhood’s green spaces, including the improvement of Peabody Terrace walkway to make it more inviting.
5. Increase and maintain street trees.

Zoning

Residence C-2 (at Central Square)

1. Maintain mixed commercial and residential uses allowed under current zoning.
2. Retain existing zoning to avoid making newer buildings non conforming; however, consider limiting the overall heights of buildings to provide a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential district.
3. Create an urban design plan for the area to give it a cohesive visual identity.

Business A (River and Western)

1. Retain the existing scale, height, density and development patterns along River Street and Western Avenue.
2. Consider new zoning which would limit the height of new residential structures to match existing structures.
3. Consider new zoning which would accommodate neighborhood businesses, yet limit the size (in square footage) of such uses.

Residence C-2 (along lower Western Avenue)

1. Consider new zoning which would limit the height of new residential structures to match the existing structures along Western Avenue.
2. Consider new zoning which would accommodate neighborhood businesses, yet limit the size (in square footage) of such uses.

Office 3 (Massachusetts Avenue)

1. Consider new zoning which would limit the overall height of new construction and provide a smooth transition between Massachusetts Avenue and the abutting residential neighborhood.

Office 3 (along Memorial Drive)

1. Consider new zoning which would:
 - a. limit the overall heights allowed in the district, as well as limit scale and density;
 - b. permit mixed residential, commercial and office uses; and
 - c. especially encourage residential uses along the neighborhood edge.
2. Create an urban design plan to accompany any new zoning which would:
 - a. place buildings with greater density and massing, and higher heights nearer to the Charles River/Memorial Drive side of the zoning district and away from the neighborhood, thus providing a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential area;
 - b. limit heights along the edge of the residential neighborhood to match or complement those of the neighborhood;

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- c. provide adequate set backs to reduce shadows and to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.

Memorial Drive

1. Consider the establishment of a parkway overlay district to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.

C O N C L U S I O N

Conclusion

The Riverside Neighborhood Study Committee represented some important firsts. It was the first time that the Community Development Department undertook such a comprehensive planning initiative in Riverside. It was the first time Harvard and neighborhood residents discussed planning issues concerning the university outside of responding to a particular development or event. From some members of the Committee, it was the first time they met some of their neighbors, getting to know them throughout the life of the study committee process.

The work of the Study Committee has yielded a wealth of constructive recommendations. At the start of the committee process in August 1990, the staff asked members what they wanted to accomplish through the process. Members volunteered such goals as define a vision for the neighborhood, learn about the community beyond their personal experiences to understand the perspectives of others living in the neighborhood, and foster pride in the community. The array and depth of the recommendations found in this study are testimony that the Committee reached these goals.

We now need to move from the business of making recommendations to implementing them. To that end, some activity has taken place. Recommendations implemented so far range from physical rehabilitation — the \$1 million reconstruction of Hoyt Field; to continued dialogue between Harvard and the community — the naming of a representative from Harvard University to the Board of the Cambridge Community Center; and to traffic improvements — the installation of a four way stop sign at the corner of Hancock and Franklin Streets. There are others, as well.

Many more recommendations remain to be implemented. With shrinking public resources, these will take creativity and commitment to see through. The telephone survey revealed that 45 percent of Riverside's residents expect that the quality of life in their neighborhood will improve over the next five years. The recommendations presented here provide the City and community with the vision and vehicle with which to achieve that goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Riverside Study

Recommendations

HOUSING

Policy

1. Maintain the economic and ethnic diversity of the neighborhood;
2. Improve the maintenance of the housing stock, both for rental and owner-occupied units;
3. Preserve Riverside's current scale, density and character;
4. Create more affordable family-sized rental housing;
5. Increase affordable opportunities for home ownership through detached single-family, cooperative, or condominium housing programs;
6. Help make possible for people who grew up in Riverside to afford to live here; and
7. Match the size and style of future housing to current trends in family size.

Rent Controlled Housing

These recommendations are addressed to the Rent Control Board, unless otherwise noted.

1. Develop a program to fund maintenance of the rent controlled housing stock in a way that does not drive the rent levels up faster than the earning power of the population. This fund could be derived from a fee on high income tenants occupying rent controlled units.
2. Create and adhere to performance standards that produce a reasonable turnaround time for rent control procedures. This would encourage owners and tenants to work within the system rather than working outside of it, or ignoring it altogether.

3. Enforce existing regulations forbidding the 'sale' of rent controlled units through bounties and key fees. This might help low and moderate income residents gain greater access to rent controlled housing.

Recommendations for Potential Housing Sites

Corporal Burns Playground

See Parks and Open Space Recommendations for more complete recommendations concerning Cpl. Burns Playground.

1. The Study Committee supports the Land Bank proposal to construct affordable housing on the eastern edge of the park along Banks Street. This should involve either the renovation or demolition of the old shower house. The Committee can support this measure only if:
 - a. any housing be limited to two or three story structures that match the texture, scale and setbacks of the surrounding wood frame structures;
 - b. the remaining park and playground area be thoroughly redesigned and refurbished; and
 - c. the existing trees are preserved or replaced.

■ *The City Council did not accept the proposed Land Bank sites for redevelopment into affordable housing.*

Vacant "rent controlled" lot at 88 Putnam Avenue (at Kinnaird Street)

1. Explore the possibility of the city acquiring the lot to construct affordable housing at a reasonable density and designed to match the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

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2. If it is not possible for the city to acquire the lot, then work with the owner to construct affordable housing on the land with the same conditions as above.

Former Elbery Ford Site, 320-366 River Street (at Putnam Avenue)

This site is located in Cambridgeport; however, the Study Committee feels that any redevelopment taking place there will have a considerable effect on Riverside.

1. Work with the owner to construct a mixed-use development on the site, including some affordable housing. The overall height of the project should be restricted and its street face should match the scale, density and height of the adjoining residential areas along River Street and Putnam Avenue.

Empty Lots at 237-253 River Street (adjoining Hoyt Field):

1. Work with the owner to develop the lot for housing that matches the scale, density and heights of the neighboring structures.

Max's, 279 Putnam Avenue (at River Street)

1. Encourage the owner to consider the site for housing.
2. Consider allowing relief from existing set back requirements to promote the construction of housing on the site while preserving the texture of the neighborhood.

Expiring Use Properties

2 Mt. Auburn Street, 411 Franklin Street, 808 Memorial Drive and 929 Massachusetts Avenue

808 Memorial Drive is located in Cambridgeport, but many consider it to be a part of the Riverside community.

1. Continue to monitor the status of these properties and take steps to preserve their affordable units.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Based on the discussion, tour and survey results, the Committee broke their discussion into two broad categories: general management and administration; and individual parks.

These recommendations are directed to the City's Open Space Committee, unless otherwise noted.

Administration

1. Make creative use of existing community resources:
 - a. encourage the involvement of community groups, as called for in the City's Open Space Plan; and
 - b. establish a liaison between the residents and the City through the City Manager's Office dealing explicitly with open space and park issues.
2. Support the City's Open Space Plan including the policy making and coordination efforts of the Open Space Committee comprising the directors and staff of the Department of Public Works, Department of Human Services Programs and the Community Development Department, along with the Deputy City Manager, in the open space planning process.
3. Record successful and unsuccessful park designs, programming and maintenance efforts to establish a centralized record of what works and what does not work. The record could become a resource for community groups during the initial planning process. Full design development of a park will be the responsibility of the City's landscape architect.
4. Increase police sweeps and surveillance of all parks to promote responsible use of parks and to deter crime and disturbances from occurring.

Allocation of Resources

1. Include resources for maintenance in new capital projects and add conditions to construction contracts that would provide for follow-up maintenance.
2. Require long term maintenance on new capital projects:
 - a. the City should adopt a policy that would mandate that funds be set aside in its budget for maintenance of capital projects; and
 - b. in the absence of sufficient maintenance resources, capital funds could be used to stockpile spare parts, if sufficient city storage space is available.

Maintenance

1. Involve schools in the maintenance of playgrounds. Schools could create a program which involves the students in the maintenance of parks and playgrounds. The program should emphasize the students' partnership with their neighborhood.
2. Tie maintenance schedule to level of use.
3. Inspect parks on a regular basis. Inspectors must be well qualified and have product (equipment) knowledge, as called for in the City's Open Space Plan.
4. Include maintenance training for park inspectors and maintenance personnel in capital investment, as called for in the City's Open Space Plan. Future hires should be qualified maintenance workers.
5. Design parks and open space with both maintenance and aesthetics in mind. Design features of new projects should be aesthetically pleasing *and* lend themselves to easy maintenance.

Programming

1. Design open spaces and parks to reflect use and programming. As outlined in the City's Open Space Plan, users should be identified, and programming should be reflective of the users' needs.
2. Explore ways to increase programming for indoor recreational activities.
3. Develop programming to meet the needs of the elderly and female populations. This in light of a gender and age bias perceived in current programming.
4. Integrate city programming with private facilities. Look for opportunities in private facilities to provide city-sponsored outreach.
5. Explore creative ways to staff parks, such as partnerships with universities, to place students in parks to provide active and involved personnel at parks and teen facilities.

Community Monitoring

1. Riverside residents should form a neighborhood group to review the conditions of the neighborhood's parks and open space each year and submit this report along with recommendations for future actions to the City Council and City Manager each year. This oversight of the neighborhood's parks and open spaces will become a permanent part of the group's agenda.

Recommendations for Specific Parks and Playgrounds

Corporal Burns Playground

1. Make the playground more active through placement of staff who will interact with users.
2. Take advantage of the playground's size for active play. This playground is larger than others in the neighborhood, and that openness should be designed and maintained in such a way to meet the active play needs of the neighborhood best.
3. Create space for younger kids and soften the surfaces to make the playground more inviting to them.
4. Remove the concrete open shelter in the center of the playground, thus adding to the amount of active play area in the park.
5. Rehabilitate the tennis courts to make them regulation size.
6. Preserve the basketball courts.
7. Plant street trees on both sides of Flagg Street as this will create a connection between the river and the neighborhood and soften the hard edge of Mather House.
8. Install signs to indicate access to the playground and river, particularly at the alley leading from Putnam Avenue through Peabody Terrace.
9. The Study Committee supports the Land Bank proposal to construct affordable housing on a portion of the park along Banks Street, provided the park be renovated as described above. (See the Housing recommendations for further detail.)

Hoyt Field

1. Make the rehabilitation/redesign of Hoyt Field a top capital budget priority.
 2. As part of the planning process for the rehabilitation/redesign of Hoyt Field, explore all potential uses including:
 - a. adding more passive open space;
 - b. adding space for a variety of teenage activities;
 - c. encouraging multi-generational uses; and
 - d. developing a programmatic relationship between the teen center and the field.
 3. As part of the rehabilitation/redesign of the field:
 - a. remove outdated and dangerous playground equipment and replace it with equipment which meets current safety standards;
 - b. remove the concrete bleachers, as they are an eyesore and their location promotes illicit activity;
 - c. consider moving the tennis courts and basketball courts further away from the residential abutters; and
 - d. create clearer, signed entrances to the park from River Street and Western Avenue, as well as install play area signs along these streets to slow traffic.
- *A \$1 million renovation of Hoyt Field was completed in the Spring of 1994.*
4. Examine the potential for using the vacant lots on River Street and Western Avenue for both the purpose of better access to Hoyt Field and additional neighborhood housing.

Franklin Street Park

1. Redesign the park with particular users and abutters in mind. The park may best serve small children, or toddlers, and the elderly, especially the residents of 411 Franklin Street.
2. As part of the redesign of the park:
 - a. differentiate spaces and define activities clearly to accommodate all targeted users and for the park to have a better relationship with the street;

- b. soften the surfaces by removing much of the concrete;
 - c. create a more open feeling by thoughtful thinning of the trees;
 - d. enhance safety by adding lighting to the rear of the park; and
 - e. discourage vagrancy by adding a fence and a gate.
3. Post the times when the park is open.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

All recommendations in this section are addressed to Harvard University unless otherwise noted.

Public Presentation

1. Remove or conceal dumpsters visible to the neighborhood, or otherwise inappropriately placed along the edge of the neighborhood, including at Peabody Terrace across from King School and at Mather house along Flagg Street.

■ *Harvard has rebuilt the dumpster area at Peabody Terrace to include a more attractive enclosure as part of their phased rehabilitation of the complex. The University will also build an enclosure for trash at Mather House in 1993.*
2. Reconsider removing the fencing around open spaces which close off large developments, such as at Peabody Terrace and Mather House, to the neighborhood. Often this open space was presented originally as a community amenity.

■ *Harvard will replace the fence along the Memorial Drive side of Peabody Terrace as part of their phased rehabilitation of the complex. Rehabilitation is scheduled for completion in 1993. Exterior landscaping has been added to help soften the exterior edges of the complex.*
3. Increase the number of trees, especially street trees along Flagg Street at Mather house, to soften the streetscape.

■ *As part of the improvements to the grounds around Mather House in 1993, Harvard will plant two or three trees along Flagg Street, depending on soil conditions.*
4. Increase maintenance of Grower's Market, especially at the edges of the property.
5. Keep up, or increase plowing of roads and sidewalks. This service benefits the entire neighborhood.

Community Interaction

1. In general, encourage constructive interaction between Harvard and Riverside, including the following specific recommendations:
 - a. Encourage the multi-cultural population at Peabody Terrace to interact with and take advantage of the many opportunities in Riverside including stores, activities and churches. Co-host a “Welcome to Riverside” multi-cultural event with the neighborhood.
 - b. Examine the use of community gardens on under utilized Harvard land, and encourage students to participate in any proposed community gardens in Riverside.

■ *Field of Dreams, a community gardening group, now has two gardens on Harvard property: one on Elmer Street and the other at Banks Street . Both have year by year agreements.*

- c. Publicize the day-care offerings of Peabody Terrace residents to Riverside residents.
- d. Maintain an ongoing interaction between Harvard and the Riverside neighborhood, especially through a Riverside neighborhood committee.

■ *Harvard has come to the neighborhood on two occasions this past year to discuss the rehabilitation of Peabody Terrace.*

- e. Have a community orientation for the faculty, staff and students of Harvard. Organize orientations in both directions, for example, a Harvard Guide to Riverside and a Riverside Guide to Harvard.

2. Encourage stronger direct support of the Riverside neighborhood, especially by having a Harvard representative sit on the Board of the Cambridge Community Center.

■ *A representative of Harvard’s Office of Government, Community, and Public Affairs now sits on the Community Center’s Board.*

Development

1. Establish development standards and guidelines which would apply to potential development sites including:
 - a. Grower’s Market site (870-886 Memorial Drive);

- b. Cowperthwaite parking lot (1-13 Cowperthwaite Street);
- c. Grant and Banks Streets parking lot (3-15 Grant Street and 37-39 Banks Street); and
- d. Elmer Street lot (27-29 Elmer Street).

2. Structure such standards and guidelines to:

- a. insure that the edges of any proposed development projects are in keeping with the height and scale of the abutting residential neighborhood, and have appropriate setbacks thus providing a smooth and visually unobtrusive transition between the institutional and residential districts;
- b. encourage neighborhood connection and access to the river, both by car and on foot.
- c. mix institutional and non-institutional uses, especially appropriate neighborhood uses, such as residential and small retail.
- d. screen and landscape all parking sites to buffer the abutters; and
- e. place unsightly elements of development, including dumpsters, cooling units, exhaust fans, transformers, large blank walls, loading docks, and fences with dangerous spikes away from the residential neighborhood, or screen them sufficiently so that they are not a visual intrusion into the neighborhood.

■ *The Committee proposes that the best way to approach this recommendation is to form a working group comprising Riverside resident representatives, City officials, and representatives from Harvard University. The working group would develop the specifics of the standards and guidelines delineated in this section.*

3. Construct structured parking within the campus and not in or directly next to the residential neighborhood.
4. Examine and address traffic and parking issues as a result of new construction.
5. The Study Committee supports residential uses for available development sites.
6. The Study Committee supports retail use at 8-10 Mt. Auburn Street.
7. The Study Committee supports housing or a community garden at Elmer Street.

Housing

1. Maintain the on going dialogue regarding university housing policies with the Riverside community through a neighborhood association;
2. Work with the City to find ways of accommodating growth without displacing local residents.
3. Work with the Riverside community and the City to include housing and provide some mixed income component in any future redevelopment of the Grower's Market at 807 Memorial Drive.

Policy

In general, Harvard should examine its policies as related to neighborhood issues for all facilities, especially parking and housing, and specifically:

1. Meet with abutters and a Riverside neighborhood organization to review any proposed development projects.
2. Investigate whether the informal Harvard "Red Line" policy should be expanded, formalized or altered.
3. Develop a master plan for future Harvard growth (Project 2000), recognizing and considering the input of neighborhood groups.

Harvard University urges the Riverside neighborhood to organize on-going citizens' association as a vehicle for future dialogue and communication between the university and the Riverside community.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Management and Public Transportation

1. Public Transportation: Explore the feasibility of an "intra-city" bus line, such as a jitney service, that would provide transportation to and from focal points within the City. This type of system could induce patronage of Central Square businesses.
2. Regional Transportation Planning: Support a regional transportation system that would decrease truck traffic into Riverside, especially on River Street and Western Avenue, and other parts of the city; decrease commuter traffic; and encourage the use of public transportation.

Traffic and Parking

These recommendations are addressed to the Department of Traffic and Transportation and the Cambridge Police Department, unless otherwise noted.

1. Enforce truck access regulations, speed limits, and parking regulations in the neighborhood. Continue to have sporadic police enforcement of current traffic regulations to show the public that violators are being fined. In addition, the Cambridge Police Department should dedicate an officer to enforce traffic regulations around the city.

Of special concern is:

- a. the continuous presence of illegal truck traffic on River Street and Western Avenue;
 - b. speeding traffic on Howard Street (during afternoon rush hour,) River and Western;
 - c. illegal parking at the north corner of Putnam Avenue at Hingham (illegally parked cars on Putnam Avenue create a blind corner, and thus a dangerous intersection); and
 - d. illegal parking on the east and west sides of Western Avenue at the Pleasant and Auburn Streets intersections.
2. Install a two way stop sign at the intersection Hancock and Green Streets.

■ *The Department of Traffic and Transportation has installed these stop signs at this intersection.*

3. Adjust light cycles at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, Mt. Auburn Street and Putnam Avenue on the Sundays when Memorial Drive is closed to traffic. Blinking lights at this intersection would facilitate the movement of through traffic using Putnam Avenue.
4. Explore the possibility of adding bicycle parking spaces and creating dedicated bicycle lanes and routes.

■ *The City Council has established a Bicycle Committee to improve bicycle access throughout the city. The Committee is installing new bicycle racks at various public locations.*

Road Conditions

These recommendations are addressed to the Public Works Department.

1. Place trash cans throughout the neighborhood including at schools, bus stops and school routes.

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2. Clean up trash.
 3. Repave Franklin Street.
 4. Develop a tree pruning schedule and adopt an active approach to maintaining street trees.
 5. Promote the pruning of privately owned trees and shrubs.
 6. Survey root damage and repair without sacrificing the tree.
 7. Conduct a survey of areas with insufficient lighting and correct the problems.
 8. Enforce sidewalk snow removal ordinance.
 9. Remove excess plowed snow from the streets.
 10. Enforce the City ordinance prohibiting the use of trash cans and other household items to save parking spaces on the street.
 11. Use alternatives to road salt during winter storms.

EMPLOYMENT AND COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION

1. Support the inclusion of business and employment issues as part of a Riverside Neighborhood Committee agenda. Such a committee would monitor operational issues such as noise, traffic and trash.
2. Support studies of neighborhood business and employment.

Central Square

1. Support human service programs to aid the homeless and other needy constituencies in the Square; and
2. Support the police to combat crime in the Square.
3. Maintain a representative from the neighborhood on the Central Square Advisory Committee.

Neighborhood Business

1. Support pro-active strategies to bring businesses to the neighborhood by:
 - a. capitalizing on the ethnic and racial diversity of the neighborhood to draw businesses into the neighborhood;

- b. promoting the location of small businesses, minority-owned businesses and women-owned businesses into the neighborhood;
 - c. restructuring the existing zoning regulations along the major streets in the neighborhood to allow small neighborhood-based and pedestrian-oriented businesses to relocate there.

Employment

1. Support the Cambridge Youth Employment Program.
2. Support the Cambridge Employment Program.
3. Support the continued development of employment programs with Harvard University.

LAND USE, ZONING AND URBAN DESIGN

Urban Design

1. Strengthen the connection of Riverside to the Charles River.
2. Create a “gateway” to Cambridge on River Street.
3. Maintain scale, density, and pattern of development appropriate to a site, especially in or bordering residential areas.
4. Promote the creation of a “greenbelt” to connect the neighborhood’s green spaces, including the improvement of Peabody Terrace walkway to make it more inviting.
5. Increase and maintain street trees.

Zoning

Residence C-2 (at Central Square)

1. Maintain mixed commercial and residential uses allowed under current zoning.
2. Retain existing zoning to avoid making newer buildings non conforming; however, consider limiting the overall heights of buildings to provide a smooth transition between this district and abutting residential district.
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3. Consider new zoning which would accommodate neighborhood businesses, yet limit the size (in square footage) of such uses.

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Office 3 (Massachusetts Avenue)

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 - a. place buildings with greater density and massing, and higher heights nearer to the Charles River/Memorial Drive side of the zoning district and away from the neighborhood, thus providing a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential area;
 - b. limit heights along the edge of the residential neighborhood to match those of the neighborhood;
 - c. provide adequate set backs to reduce shadows and to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.

Memorial Drive

1. Consider the establishment of a parkway overlay district to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.